

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 152055Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3876

S E C R E T SANTIAGO 2118  
EXDIS  
EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, CI, SHUM  
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR CAUAS' CALL ON PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE CURRENT  
CHILEAN SITUATION

REFS: SANTIAGO 2025 AND 2026

1. SUMMARY: WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL RECEIVE THE CREDENTIALS OF JORGE CAUAS, THE NEW CHILEAN AMBASSADOR, ON MARCH 23 OR 24. THE CEREMONY WILL TAKE PLACE AT A MOMENT WHEN THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN CHILE IS HIGHLY CHARGED, AND WHEN GOC ATTITUDES TOWARD THE U.S. ARE DISTINCTLY COOL. WE PROPOSE THAT THE PRESIDENT MAKE OR HUMAN RIGHTS VIEWS CLEAR IN HIS REMARKS TO CAUAS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE DUST SEEMS NOW TO BE SETTLING AFTER THE STEPS THE JUNTA TOOK ON MARCH 11 AND 12 TO DISSOLVE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) AND REQUIRE OFFICIAL ASSENT FOR NEW PUBLICATIONS AND IMPORTED PUBLICATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, REACTION TO THE DEVELOPMENTS ON CHILE AT THE U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING IN GENEVA HAS BEEN UNIFORMLY STRONG AND CRITICAL OF THE USG. MUCH SYMPATHY IS EXPRESSED FOR ARGENTINA, BRAZIL AND URUGUAY IN THEIR RESPONSE TO U.S. ACTIONS.

3. AS THINGS QUIET DOWN, WE ARE LEFT WITH, FIRST, A BADLY SHAKEN PDC WHOSE LEADERS FEAR ARREST OR EXILE AT ANY TIME; SECOND, DOZENS OF SECOND AND THIRD LEVEL WORRIED

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OFFICE-HOLDERS WHO WERE ASKED TO PRESENT RESIGNATIONS AS PINOCHET PREPARED TO RESHUFFLE HIS CABINET AND GOVERNMENT, AND WHO, ESPECIALLY IF THEY HAD PDC AFFILIATIONS, NOW FEAR THEY WILL LOSE THEIR JOBS; THIRD, INDICATIONS THAT THE HARD-LINERS AROUND PINOCHET ARE FOR THE TIME BEING IN THE ASCENDANT; AND FOURTH, A NOTICEABLE, THOUGH NOT PROFOUND EMPHASIS ON SOUTHERN CONE SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF STRESS FROM OUTSIDE.

4. PUTTING THE SITUATION IN A LONGER PERSPECTIVE, WE WOULD SAY THAT THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS IN REDUCING DETENTIONS, TORTURE, AND MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCES HAS TO SOME EXTENT BEEN OFFSET BY THE NEW RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL PARTIES AND PUBLICATIONS. THE GOC'S ACTIONS HAVE BEEN TOUGH AND ARROGANT, NO DOUBT BECAUSE IT CORRECTLY FELT THAT THE PDC, IN CIRCULATING ITS ALTERNATIVE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE OF CHILE, WAS DIRECTLY CHALLENGING PINOCHET AND THE JUNTA. THE END RESULT IS TO REDUCE TO NEGLIGIBLE PROPORTIONS THE POSSIBILITY, FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, OF CHILEANS WORKING INSIDE CHILE FOR POLITICAL CHANGE BY PEACEFUL MEANS.

5. THE PRESIDENT MIGHT WELL TAKE THESE FACTORS INTO ACCOUNT WHEN AMBASSADOR JORGE CAUAS PRESENTS HIS CREDENTIALS NEXT WEEK. THIS COULD BE DONE EITHER IN THE PRESIDENT'S FORMAL STATEMENT, OR IN SUCH SIDE CONVERSATION AS MAY TAKE PLACE ON THE OCCASION. A POSSIBLE APPROACH MIGHT INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING THEMES. FIRST, OUR CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE IS NOT AN ISOLATED THING, BUT A PART OF OUR DEEP FEELING REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS WHEREVER THEY MAY BE JEOPARDIZED -- IN COUNTRIES OF BOTH THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT. SECOND, WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN CHILE AS REGARDS INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, WE REGRET THAT RESTRICTIONS ON PEACEFUL POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN CHILE SEEM IF ANYTHING TO BE INCREASING. THIRD, WE HOPE THAT SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT IN THE GOC'S PRACTICES IN THESE MATTERS MAY MAKE POSSIBLE  
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AND IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS, WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN AND OUGHT TO BE RELATIONS OF COOPERATION AND CONFIDENCE.

6. THE OBJECTIVE OF REMARKS OF THIS CHARACTER WOULD BE TO GET ACROSS TO THE JUNTA, FOR THE FIRST TIME, A TOP-LEVEL REACTION FROM THE NEW ADMINISTRATION TO RECENT TRENDS IN CHILE, AND TO DO SO IN THE LEAST PROVOCATIVE MANNER. WHILE THERE MIGHT BE RESENTMENT EVEN AT SUCH ELLIPTICAL COMMENTS AS THESE, THERE IS MUCH TO BE SAID FOR MAKING THE RECORD CLEAR.  
POPPER

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER S/S-O, MR. MACFARLANE.

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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